

God's Word

Picture this. A young German immigrant steps off the boat in England in the early 1800s with almost nothing. His name is George Müller. He opens the Bible one day and takes Jesus at His word. Jesus said in Matthew 6:33, "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you." Müller decides that single promise is enough to build his entire life on.

He never asks another human being for money, not once. Instead he simply prays and trusts God's clear commands. Over the next sixty years he builds five massive orphanages in Bristol that care for more than ten thousand children. During the worst famines and economic storms of the Victorian era the food still arrives on the exact day it is needed. Sometimes the milk cart rolls up minutes before breakfast with no explanation except answered prayer.

Müller also sends millions of dollars to missionaries around the world while he himself lives simply. Every orphan is fed, clothed, and taught the Bible. Every need is met without fail. His life becomes living proof that a person who hears God's Word and acts on it builds a house that stands firm no matter what comes.

That is the kind of good tree Jesus is talking about in Matthew 7:17-27. That is the kind of foundation we can have today when we choose the same simple obedience.

I. Introduction

George Müller's life shows us exactly what Jesus is talking about in our message today. A life built on simple obedience to God's Word produces good fruit and an unshakable foundation.

From the beginning, when it comes to the binary nature of obedience and disobedience, nothing has changed. In the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve heard God's clear command to not eat from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, yet chose disobedience, and brought permanent consequences upon the world. This was because they chose to believe Satan's word over God's Word. We must realize that there is nothing greater than God's Word as God's Word is God's God. Psalm 138:2 says, "You have magnified Your word above all Your name." God's Word created the universe and all the laws within it that govern our lives. Therefore God's Word must also be our highest authority that we are obedient to.

This is why Jesus warns us in Matthew 7:13-14, "Enter through the narrow gate, for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and

there are many who enter through it. For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it." Anything other than full obedience to God's Word is the broad road that leads to destruction. Obedience is binary. You either obey and build on God's Word or you rebel and build on unstable sand.

King Saul knew exactly what God told him to do but offered only partial obedience. God had commanded Saul to completely destroy the Amalekites and all that belonged to them. Yet after winning the battle, Saul spared the Amalekite king and kept the best sheep and cattle for himself. He claimed he would use them as sacrifices. Because of this disobedience God rejected him as king.

Balaam heard God's word but twisted it for personal gain. Balak king of Moab, offered Balaam a great reward if he would curse the people of Israel. God clearly told Balaam not to go and not to curse them. But Balaam loved the money and kept pressing God until he finally went anyway. Balaam did all he could to give the Balak what he wanted but God turned his words into blessings instead. Balaam was determined to get what he wanted at the expense of the kingdom of God. So Balaam advised Balak to lure the Israelites to worship their gods and Jehovah God would turn against him. Numbers 31:16 NASBS

Behold, these caused the sons of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to trespass against the LORD in the matter of Peor, so the plague was among the congregation of the LORD.

This initially worked but Israel turned and repented and Balaam ended up killed by Israel. Numbers 31:8 NASBS

...they also killed Balaam the son of Beor with the sword.

It is the examples of people like Balaam that Jesus says in Matthew 7:21-23 NASBS

"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.'

Just like Balaam, King Saul, and Adam and Eve, we are each responsible for our own destiny.

Matthew 7:17-27 “Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. So then, you will know them by their fruits. Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.’ Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them, may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house, and yet it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. Everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not act on them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house, and it fell, and great was its fall.”

Today we are going to look at this passage through three clear lenses. First, we will see the test of authenticity, the difference between good trees and bad fruit. Second, we will discover why simply saying “Lord, Lord” is never enough. And third, we will examine the two builders and what it really means to build your life on the rock that stands through every storm. Let’s begin with the test of authenticity.

II. Main Point 1: The Test of Authenticity, Good Trees, Bad Fruit

In Matthew 7:17-20 Jesus gives us a clear test for real faith. He says, “Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. So then, you will know them by their fruits.”

Jesus is not talking about how successful a person looks on the outside. He is also not talking about big crowds, dramatic miracles, or impressive words. He is talking about the actual results that come from a life built on full obedience to God’s Word. A good tree always produces good fruit because its roots are deep in what God has said and demonstrated. A bad tree may look healthy for a while, but it eventually produces bad fruit that cannot last.

Jesus Himself lived this truth perfectly. He was the first Christian, and He never invented new teachings. He only taught and did what He saw the Father

doing in the Old Testament. In John 5:19 He says, "Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing, for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner." And in John 7:16-17 He adds, "My teaching is not Mine, but His who sent Me. If anyone is willing to do His will, he will know of the teaching, whether it is of God or whether I speak from Myself." This is the divine binary. If something is not what God says or demonstrates in Scripture, it is not true doctrine. Anything else is like mixing in human ideas, and that always produces bad fruit in the end.

Look at the fruit in George Müller's life that we saw earlier. He simply took God at His word in Matthew 6:33, "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you." He built five orphanages, cared for more than ten thousand children, and sent millions to missions. Every need was met through prayer and obedience. That is good fruit that has affected generations and generations to come.

The same kind of good fruit appears in the life of King Josiah. In second Kings chapter 22, the high priest finds the long-lost Book of the Law in the temple. When the scroll of Israel's impending judgment by God is read to Josiah, he tears his robes in repentance. He does not debate it. He does not soften it. He does not add his own ideas to it. Josiah calls for Huldah the prophetess and she tells Josiah in 2 Kings 22:15-20 NASBS

"Thus says the LORD God of Israel, 'Tell the man who sent you to me, thus says the LORD, "Behold, I bring evil on this place and on its inhabitants, even all the words of the book which the king of Judah has read. Because they have forsaken Me and have burned incense to other gods that they might provoke Me to anger with all the work of their hands, therefore My wrath burns against this place, and it shall not be quenched.'" But to the king of Judah who sent you to inquire of the LORD thus shall you say to him, 'Thus says the LORD God of Israel, "Regarding the words which you have heard, because your heart was tender and you humbled yourself before the LORD when you heard what I spoke against this place and against its inhabitants that they should become a desolation and a curse, and you have torn your clothes and wept before Me, I truly have heard you," declares the LORD. "Therefore, behold, I will gather you to your fathers, and you will be gathered to your grave in peace, and your eyes will not see all the evil which I will bring on this place.'" So they brought back word to the king.

In response in second Kings chapter 23 Josiah gathers the entire nation, reads the Word aloud, and immediately obeys every command. He smashes every idol, tears down the false altars, removes the pagan priests, and restores the Passover celebration exactly as God had written it. The Bible says this revival

was greater than anything since the days of Samuel. Josiah's obedience produced thirtyfold, sixtyfold, and hundredfold fruit. Even when storms of judgment later came on Judah, God gave Josiah peace in his own lifetime because his house was built on the rock of God's Word.

This is the test of authenticity. You can know a person by their fruit. When someone hears God's Word and acts on it exactly as it is written, good fruit always follows. When someone adds philosophy, tradition, or personal preference, the fruit eventually withers and the tree is cut down. This is why Jesus warned us so clearly. The good tree stands because its roots go all the way down to the unchanging Word of God.

This test of authenticity leads us straight into the next truth Jesus gives us. Simply saying "Lord, Lord" is never enough. Let's look at that now.

III. Main Point 2: Lip Service vs. Life Submission

Jesus now takes the test of authenticity even deeper in Matthew 7:21-23. He says, "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.'"

These verses are sobering. Jesus makes it very clear that simply saying the right words is not enough. Even doing impressive spiritual things in His name is not enough if our lives are not fully submitted to doing the will of the Father. The will of the Father is not found in our opinions or traditions. It is found only in what God has said and demonstrated in Scripture. This is the divine binary Jesus lived by. Anything else leads to the kind of lawlessness that causes a person to hear those terrible words on judgment day.

This principle is not new. The Old Testament gives us a powerful example in 1 Kings chapter 13. A man of God was sent by the Lord to deliver a message of judgment to King Jeroboam at the altar in Bethel. God gave him very clear instructions. He was to speak the message, and then leave immediately. He must not eat bread or drink water in that place, and he must not return by the same road he came. The man of God obeyed perfectly. He delivered the message, caused the king's hand to wither and then healed it, and refused the king's invitation to eat because he was determined to follow God's command exactly.

Later an older prophet heard about what happened and went after the man of

God. This older prophet lied to him. He claimed an angel had told him to bring the man of God back to his house to eat and drink. Even though the man of God had received direct instructions from God Himself, he listened to a voice other than God's and disobeyed the clear command he had been given. Because he chose to heed human words instead of God's explicit Word, he was killed by a lion on his way home. God even spoke through the same prophet who had deceived him to pronounce judgment on him for his disobedience.

This story shows the danger of lip service and partial submission. Even someone who starts strong in obedience and performs miracles can fall if he listens to any voice other than God's clear Word. King Saul and Balaam made the same mistake. They knew what God said but did not fully submit their lives to it. Just like Adam and Eve, their choices brought serious consequences.

The will of the Father is simple yet demanding. It means we do exactly what God has said and demonstrated in Scripture without adding our own ideas, without mixing in philosophy, and without following human traditions that contradict His Word. George Müller and King Josiah show us what this looks like. They heard God's Word and obeyed it fully. Their lives produced lasting good fruit.

Jesus is calling us to move beyond saying the right words. He wants our lives to be fully submitted to doing the will of the Father. This truth leads us naturally into His final illustration about the two builders and the importance of not just hearing but acting on His words.

IV. Main Point 3: The Two Builders, Hearing Is Not Enough, Doing Is the Rock

Jesus now brings this entire teaching to a powerful close in Matthew 7:24-27. He says, "Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them, may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house, and yet it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. Everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not act on them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house, and it fell, and great was its fall."

Jesus makes the choice crystal clear. Hearing His words is not enough. Only those who hear and act on them build their lives on the rock. The rock is full obedience to what God has said and demonstrated in Scripture. Jesus never offered new ideas of His own. He lived by the divine binary we have seen

throughout this message. In John 5:19 He says, "Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing, for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner." And in John 7:16-17 He adds, "My teaching is not Mine, but His who sent Me. If anyone is willing to do His will, he will know of the teaching, whether it is of God or whether I speak from Myself." The words Jesus speaks in the Sermon on the Mount are the Father's words. When we obey them exactly as they are written, we stand on the only foundation that cannot be shaken.

George Müller built his life on this rock. He took Jesus at His word in Matthew 6:33, "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you." He never asked a single person for money. He simply prayed and obeyed. Five large orphanages rose in Bristol. More than ten thousand children were fed, clothed, and taught the Bible. Millions of dollars flowed to missionaries around the world. Famines and economic storms came, but the needs were always met on the exact day they arose. His house stood firm because it was founded on simple, complete obedience to God's Word.

King Josiah built his life on this same rock. In second Kings chapter 22 the high priest found the Book of the Law in the temple. When it was read aloud, Josiah tore his robes in repentance. In second Kings chapter 23 he called the entire nation together, read every word of Scripture, and obeyed it without hesitation. He destroyed every idol, tore down every false altar, removed the pagan priests, and restored the Passover celebration exactly as God had commanded. The revival that followed was the greatest since the time of Samuel. Even when the storms of judgment later swept over Judah, God granted Josiah peace in his own lifetime. His obedience produced lasting fruit because his house rested on the rock of God's unchanging Word.

The storms always come. Rain falls. Floods rise. Winds blow. Trials, pressure, and even death test every life. The house built on sand collapses with a great fall. The man of God in first Kings chapter 13 started strong. He obeyed God's clear command to the letter and performed miracles. Yet when another prophet gave him a different message, he listened to the human voice instead of God's explicit Word. He ate and drank where God had forbidden it. A lion killed him on the road home. King Saul heard God's command to destroy the Amalekites completely, yet he spared the king and kept the best animals. Balaam heard God's direct order not to curse Israel, yet he twisted it for money. Adam and Eve heard God's simple instruction not to eat from the tree, yet they chose another voice. Every one of them built on sand. Their houses fell, and great was the fall.

Psalm 18:30 tells us, "As for God, His way is blameless. The word of the LORD

is tried. He is a shield to all who take refuge in Him.” Psalm 119:160 states, “The sum of Your word is truth, and every one of Your righteous ordinances is everlasting.” The rock is not our opinions, not our traditions, not our favorite philosophies. The rock is doing exactly what God has said and demonstrated in Scripture. When we hear Jesus’ words and act on them, our lives become unshakable no matter what storms arrive.

This is the final test Jesus gives us in Matthew 7:17-27. The choice is ours. We can build on the rock through full obedience, or we can build on sand and watch it collapse. Let us choose the rock today.